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# Research Factsheet: Domestic Workers in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania

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# Research Factsheet: Domestic Workers in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania

**Keywords**

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**Disciplines**

Sociology | Work, Economy and Organizations

## RESEARCH FACTSHEET

### Domestic Workers in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania

By Pilar Gonalons-Pons, Assistant Professor in Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

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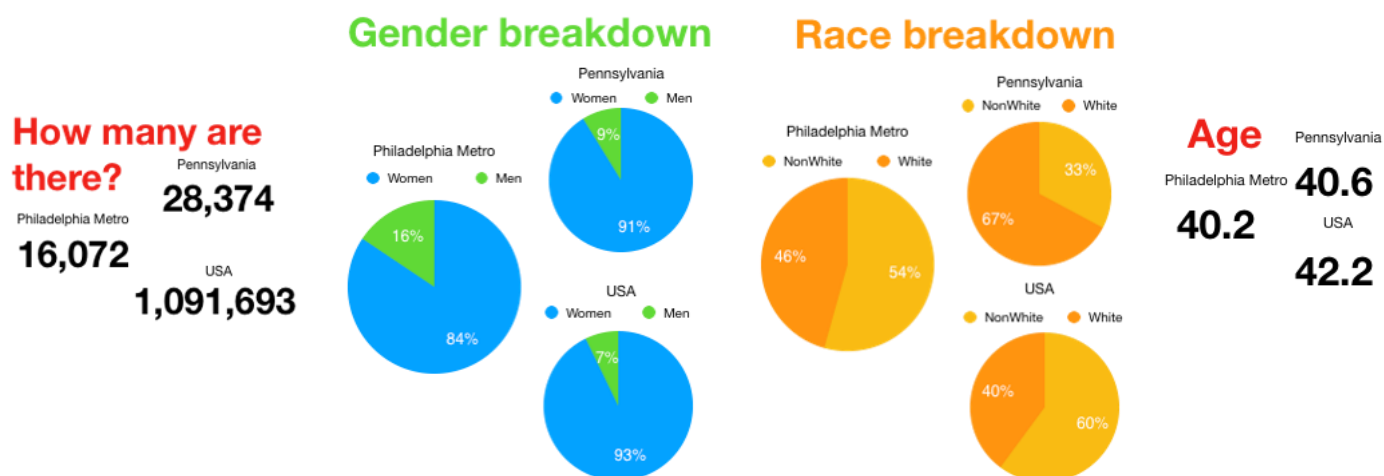
Domestic workers are a growing share of employees and their socioeconomic conditions are precarious. Domestic workers work in the homes of private individuals and families and perform a number of tasks, which include but are not limited to cleaning, laundry, shopping, caring for children, and caring for aging adults. Domestic workers are employed in different modalities, some work in multiple houses while others work full-time for a single household, sometimes living with their employers.

Due to historical discrimination against domestic labor and workers of color, domestic workers are excluded from most basic labor protections. This means that domestic workers are vulnerable to labor rights violations and lack protections available to other workers, such as minimum wage, overtime, or paid time off. Domestic Bills of Rights across the country seek to address this historical injustice.

Figures below use the 2016 American Community Survey data to show basic sociodemographic characteristics of domestic workers in Philadelphia Metro Area, Pennsylvania, and the United States.

The overwhelming majority of domestic workers are women, and many are non-white women. In Philadelphia, 54% of domestic workers are women of color.

The average woman employed in domestic work is about 40 years old and the vast majority have completed high school education or above.



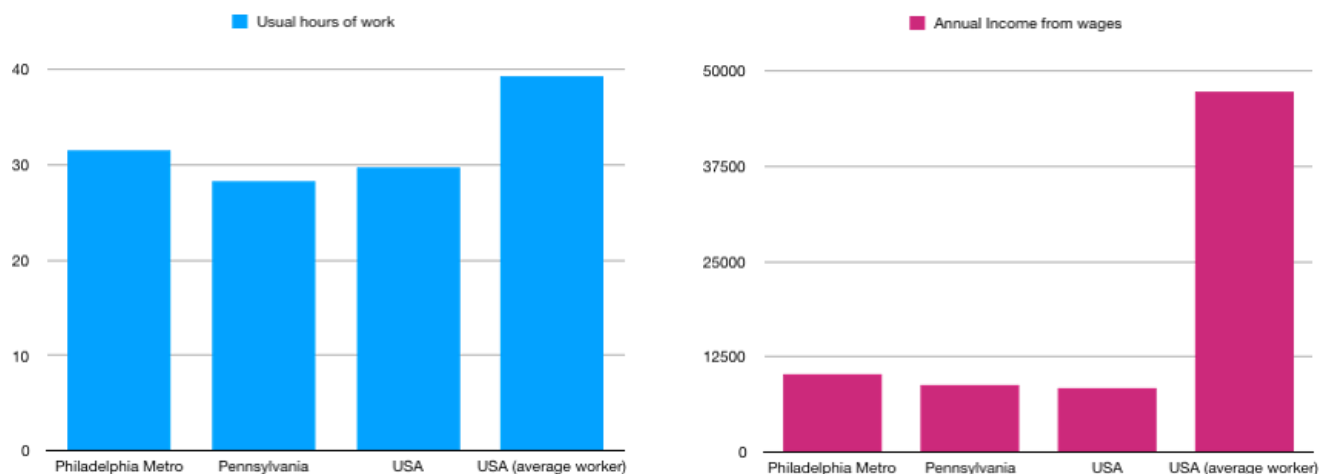
Domestic workers are amongst the most precarious jobs. Full-time jobs with adequate working conditions and pay are difficult to come by. Most workers end up combining multiple jobs to get sufficient hours of work per week.

Figures below show basic statistics about the economic conditions in domestic work jobs.

The average weekly working hours are substantially lower among domestic workers compared to the average worker. Domestic workers across the United States work about 30 hours per week, almost 10 hours less than the average worker in the country.

Domestic workers' average yearly income is well below the average of an average worker, and also well below the poverty line which is at \$11,880 for a single-person household.

In Philadelphia Metro, the average annual income for a domestic worker is just at \$10,000, in Pennsylvania is just below \$9,000.



**Data source:** 2016 American Community Survey: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>